

**FINAL Approved Minutes of November 12, 2009**

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Jennifer Carroll, Chair; Jack Frost; Jim Heffernan, Vice Chair; Tom Kalal, Sheila Mulvey, Peter H. O'Meara, Ex-Officio; Patrick Vingo; Ted Walen.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Donna Bouteiller; Carlos Colon; Gregory Kelly; Dr. John Pelegano, Secretary

DDS STAFF IN ATTENDANCE: Kathryn du Pree, Deputy Commissioner; Christine Pollio, Legislative & Executive Affairs; Sarah Kasacek, Director of Investigations, Ed Mambruno, Ombudsperson.

GUEST: Izabella Pulvermacher, Dental Coordinator

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 pm. Jennifer Carroll welcomed Council Members and Izabella Pulvermacher, the DDS Dental Coordinator. Ms. Carroll thanked Jim Heffernan for chairing the October meeting.

REVIEW OF OCTOBER MINUTES:

Jim Heffernan made one technical correction to the minutes. Mr. Heffernan moved that the minutes be approved as amended. Patrick Vingo seconded. The minutes were approved. Tom Kalal noted how helpful OPM Secretary Robert Genuario's presentation was to understand the current economic situation..

OMBUDSPERSON REPORT:

Ed Mambruno summarized his visits to nursing facilities and talked about his intervention with one person who is losing her day program because of a business closing soon. Staff is working to locate a comparable opportunity. Mr. Mambruno is spending more time with individuals he is visiting, now that he is undertaking his second round of visits.

DENTAL SERVICES:

Izabella Pulvermacher, Dental Coordinator, discussed her role coordinating dental services and trying to expand dental availability for DDS consumers. She provided an outline of her presentation to members that explained her role at DDS, professional relationships, community collaborations, and education opportunities. She also handed out the October edition of her quarterly newsletter "DDS Dental News."

Ms. Pulvermacher initiated a discussion regarding dental insurance for DDS consumers as requested at a previous council meeting. Jim Heffernan raised the concern about the lack of dentists who accept Medicaid. Eighty percent (80%) of children's dentists accept Medicaid but only 15-20% of dentists accept Medicaid for adults. A discussion ensued about Medicaid coverage and the reimbursement methodology. Peter discussed the evolution of coverage including the Council's advocacy and activities two to four years ago. The Department of Developmental Services (DDS) has established a dental fellowship at the UCONN dental school and established the department's dental coordinator. Public dental services, while limited, have been opened to community

consumers. There are a number of federally funded dental clinics that are used by our consumers. Members asked for a list of the clinics. Izabella will get this information to Christine to email to members. Mr. Frost asked if we should try to direct more people to the clinics. Ms. Pulvermacher noted they have waiting lists for new referrals. Mr. Frost and Ms. Pulvermacher discussed the need for clear and well communicated dental health standards. Mr. Heffernan discussed the availability of extending health and dental insurance for adult children who have disabilities. Ms. Mulvey discussed the research into the dental / physical health connection. Ted Walen raised the importance of educating parents. Ms. Pulvermacher is willing to train any group. Ms. Mulvey suggested a future legislative breakfast focused on the need for greater access to dental services and the need for adequate reimbursement. Jennifer Carroll thanked Ms. Pulvermacher and told her how well regarded she is in the community and among parents.

WAITING LIST PRESENTATION:

Deputy Commissioner Kathryn du Pree presented an update on the completion of the Waiting List Initiative and the current status of the Waiting List. A copy of her presentation was sent to members electronically and will be available on the DDS website with the minutes from this meeting.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE:

All legislative sessions have adjourned with no override of the Governor's veto so DDS is moving ahead to implement the conversion project. It is anticipated that the legislature might want to have more of a role in privatization decisions in the future.

The Birth to Three public hearing is being held today about the increase in parent fees. Few people have testified. The DDS medication administration regulations have been revised to incorporate legislative feedback and resubmitted to the Legislative Regulations Review Committee. They should be on the Committee's November agenda.

Christine and Rod are awaiting feedback from the Governor's office and the OPM regarding DDS's non-budgetary legislative proposals for the 2010 legislative session.

The deficiency hearing is scheduled for November 18, 2009. Both Secretary Robert Genuario and Commissioner Peter O'Meara will testify. Christine will share the Commissioner's testimony electronically with council members. The Governor issued rescissions on November 3, which reduced the DDS budget by almost \$4 million. The Governor is currently preparing a deficit mitigation plan to present to the legislature.

Staff from the Legislative Office of Fiscal Analysis and Legislative Commissioners Office along with Rep. Betsy Ritter (Co-Chair Public Health Committee) and Rep. John Geragosian (Co-Chair Appropriations Committee) will be touring Southbury Training School (STS) on Tuesday Nov. 17th.

Governor Rell announced this week that she will not seek reelection in 2010. Elections for constitutional officers and state legislators will take place in November 2010.

Christine has updated all contact information for council members and put the updated document in member's binders or folders.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT:

Commissioner Peter O'Meara reported on the status of the conversion project. All committees are continuing to review proposals. He has received the first recommendation for one home. Families

are very involved in the selection process. As homes transition to the private sector, direct support employees will be redeployed to public sector vacancies.

Commissioner O'Meara reported that revenue projections are not being met and may increase this year's deficit. The Governor can direct rescissions up to 5%. Further reductions would be recommended through a deficit mitigation plan.

The current rescissions for DDS are mostly in Personal Services (\$3.4 M) and would have been used to offset deficiencies in Other Expenses and Workers' Compensation. Other deficiencies are projected in the Voluntary Services Program and Birth to Three. Clinical Services and Temporary Supports will experience small rescissions. Commissioner O'Meara anticipates further rescissions as the fiscal year continues.

Each department is required to propose 5% budget reduction options for FY 10 for the Governor's consideration.

Commissioner O'Meara talked about the Governor's decision not to run for the reelection. He noted her continued support for the department and our consumers.

H1N1 updates are posted on the DDS website. Information is available for families, providers and staff.

Commissioner O'Meara discussed the joint motion to dismiss the Southbury Training School case which was signed by Judge Burns last week.

The first nursing student to receive a DDS scholarship will begin working in our field by the spring. We hope to increase the number of scholarships. There may be stimulus money through the Office of Workforce Competitiveness to fund this initiative going forward.

Commissioner O'Meara and Deputy Commissioner du Pree visited the Lighthouse Program. The visit with the residents was rewarding and refreshing.

Commissioner O'Meara attended the Special Olympics International Law Enforcement Torch Run conference in Connecticut, which was well attended and showcased the strength of the program.

The department is continuing to transition from the loss of staff to the RIP. The refill process continues to be slow.

Ted Walen asked about the Messier Case, which Commissioner O'Meara hopes will be resolved by the spring of 2010.

Tom Kalal asked about the future for the Lighthouse program presented at the October meeting. Deputy Commissioner Kathryn du Pree and Commissioner O'Meara had dinner with the participants. The regional staff has a meeting planned to review options and will then meet with the families.

Patrick Vingo asked about the statute that closed admissions to STS, which was passed in the mid 1990s. Christine said that she would email the information to members. It was passed in a budget implementer bill.

OLD BUSINESS:

The Council discussed the meeting schedule and locations for calendar year 2010. Meetings for September and November were changed to September 16 and November 16 because of holidays. Ted Walen made a motion to approve the schedule and Tom Kalal seconded it. The schedule was approved by the Council. A list of proposed and requested topics for presentations was discussed and Council members were in agreement with the proposed list.

NEW BUSINESS:

Jennifer Carroll thanked those members who volunteered to serve on the nominating committee. Jack Frost, Tom Kalal and Ted Walen will present the slate of officers at the December meeting.

Lighthouse

Jennifer Carroll discussed the topic of visiting the Lighthouse program. Lynn Schroeder, Diane Martin and Jane Bolles introduced themselves as parents of people who are served by Lighthouse. They thanked Commissioner Peter O'Meara and Deputy Commissioner Kathryn du Pree for their visit. Ms Carroll will arrange and schedule a visit for herself and invite any interested Council members.

Mr. Kalal asked if the Council should sponsor a legislative breakfast. Council members discussed needing a focused topic and adequate time to plan it. Mr. Frost discussed the South Region forums, which were sponsored by DDS with participation of local providers to inform families about what services are available. The forums were educational opportunities for families and highlight collaboration among numerous entities. Mr. Frost proposed that there be a concerted effort to get resource information to families, possibly through school systems. Both the North Region Advisory Committee and the Family Support Council do annual events at the legislature. Ms. Carroll recommended bringing this discussion back up at the December meeting.

The group will host a potluck supper for the annual meeting in December prior to the meeting. Jen Carroll will contact members to coordinate.

Jack Frost made a motion to adjourn the meeting which seconded by Ted Walen. The motion passed and Jennifer Carroll adjourned the meeting at 8:45 PM.